making efforts to get stays vacated and filing urgent hearing petitions in the Supreme Court and Appellate Tribunals for deciding the cases on priority basis.

(b) Government is aware of the news-item which appeared in the Pioneer dated 14th July, 2001.

(c) The Income Tax Act provides for arrest and detention of an assessee in prison in suitable cases, if the assessee is in default in making payment of taxes. In respect of customs duty, strict action is taken under Section 142 of the Customs Act, 1962 for recovery of sums due to the Government. Similarly, sufficient provisions have been made in Central Excise Law to recover the tax arrears. These include detaining of goods, and sale of movable and immovable properties of the defaulters.

Retrenchment in Central Customs and Excise Department

†1785. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 5.2 per cent retrenchment of employees of Central Customs and Excise Department will be effected retrenching thereby 3600 employees out of 68761;

(b) whether this retrenchment would be effective on Class III and Class IV employees or on officers as well;

(c) whether it is an injustice to the lowly paid employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir. However, the re-structuring plan of Customs and Central Excise Department approved by the Government envisages abolition of 3600 posts vacant or to fall vacant when existing incumbents are promoted or retire. There will be no retrenchment of existing staff.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Inflation in the Economy

†1786. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank's assistance is becoming

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.